# Lilith 2.0

**Part One is the Fall From Heaven**

You’ve heard of vampires, witches and the succubus. They are traditionally female monsters. They terrify you because they challenge the notion of male power: they can make a grown man scream. Female monsters are based off of the Hebrew myth of Lilith. Everyone knows the story of Adam and Eve, but they don’t know that before there was Eve, there was Lilith. Lilith was Adam’s original wife, created not from his rib, but at the same time by God from the same dust as Adam. Adam told Lilith that her job was to be subservient to him- he told her that it was her duty to lay beneath him, complacent. But Lilith knew the truth- she was created from the same Earth as Adam, at the same time, and she left the Garden of Eden and refused to come back. God sent three angels to bring her back to the garden, but Lilith told the angels she would forever vow to destroy their notion of nuclear families. So God created Eve from Adam’s rib, so that Eve could never repeat Lilith’s actions and claim she deserved equality. From this story, Lilith has been spun as a monster, a witch, and other forms of the Other in myths rooted in ancient Assyrian culture. She is a warning of the power of women, painted as evil to warn the danger of women forgetting their place.

**Deborah Grenn-Scott analyzes Cosi Fabian’s poem “Liturgy for Lilith**” (1991). The Lilith Institute. 2009. <http://www.lilithinstitute.com/creations/liturgy.html> CM

**I am Lilith, Grandmother of Mary** Magdalene∂ **I am Lilith, whose sexual fire was too hot for God**.∂ **I am Lilith, the First Woman, who chose the rage of exile over the cancer**∂ **Of servitude**.∂ **I am Lilith, Mother to the Mother-less.**∂ **I am Lilith, whose blood covers the moon**.∂ I am Lilith, standing on owl’s claws at a woman’s crossroads.∂ I am Lilith, the Whore in the gateway of the Temple.∂ I am Lilith, whose serpentine tongue caused Eve to laugh, and pick the∂ apple!∂ I am Lilith, Revolving Sword of Flame – scorching hypocrisy from truth’s∂ white bones.∂ **I am Lilith, free-moving in the Wilderness.**∂ **I am Lilith, spirit of night and air.**∂ **I am Lilith, in whose dark caves transgressors find sanctuary**.∂ I am Salome.∂ I am Morgan le Faye.∂ I am the Queen of Shayba –∂ My hair is black, and I am ‘dark but comely’,∂ **(Solomon sang my song!)**.∂ My hair is red and my skin, ivory.∂ I am Eve’s big sister.∂ I am Lilith, Mother to the motherless.∂ I am Lilith, whose sexual fire was too hot for God.∂ **I am Lilith, living in the Shadow.**∂ **Waiting. For you**.∂ ∂ I believe **Fabian’s work**, which ranges from poetry to playwriting, **provides us with** exciting new **images of Lilith and** of sacred **sexuality.** **Fabian**, who refers to her profession as that of sacred prostitute, **gives us Lilith in a** new, **strongly feminist light**. **She portrays Lilith as bold, openly sexual, irreverent, enlightened, righteously rageful** at times **and unquestionably empowered**.

Forget the picture of Lilith as a monster and know her as she really was: Lilith was the first feminist.

#### Part Two is Affirming the Slut

We use jury nullification as a way to check back against unjust laws- juries can nullify when they know the defendant is guilty but think the law is unfair. **Nedermeier et al:**

Keith E. Nedermeier, Irwin A. Horowitz, Norbert L. Kerr. Informing Jurors of Their Nullification Power: A Route to a Just Verdict or Juridical Chaos? Law and Human Behavior, Vol. 23, No. 3 (June 1999), pp. 331-351.

Indeed, **proponents of nullification define that power as the jury's right to return an acquittal when strict interpretation of the law would result in an injustice and violate the moral conscience of the community** (Scheflin,1972). Some have suggested that the **jury's nullification power does not abrogate statutes or precedents**, thereby creating new law, but rather **the exercise of this power "perfects" the application of current law by adding needed discretion and mercy** (Scheflin & Van Dyke, 1991).

Society cast away Lilith because she dared to say no to subservience- I affirm the Lilith in all of us and TAKE BACK HER POWER. Lilith represents a politics of embracing sexuality and refusing to be ashamed. Wells: Kimberly Ann Wells, Screaming, Flying and Laughing: Magical Feminism’s Witches in Contemporary Film, Television, and Novels. May 2007. CM

The temple of Proserpexa is decorated by snarling gargoyles, and an inverted pentagram topped off by a trident. But most importantly she needs **the** effigy of what is actually a statue combining iconography of several female goddess figures. It is this “effigy” of Proserpexa that is a most **powerful image of unruly goddesses and female rage and power**, but it also **combines** several other **feminist icons, including Lilith**, known as **Adam’s first wife,** and **a symbol of female disobedience and rebellion** (Figure 11). In its appearance, the effigy of Proserpexa is a cross between Medusa and Lilith, naked, white, snarling with a pointy tongue protruding and a snake wrapped around her. The visuals of the statue are almost identical to a painting by John Collier of Lilith, which similarly shows the white naked body of the woman encircled by the dark snake (Figure 14). Aside from being interesting allusions comparing Persephone/Demeter, the show points us to a mythology that is matriarchal, and places Tara/Willow’s story into another context than that of the crazed, destructive lesbian. **It** further **portrays** Willow as part of a **feminist power** iconography, and allows pleasure for viewers for whom these images resonate. **It rewrites the archetype of the dark destructive witch to a** more ambiguous mythos that can also be seen as a source of multiple co-existing types of power, not just evil or good, but formidable and complex combination of both. In opening up these alternatives, the show allows for a **complex representation of female power.**

This in turn subverts the idea of stereotypical gender roles. Embrace the notion of the sexually empowered female as a method of letting females go free. Wells 2: Kimberly Ann Wells, Screaming, Flying and Laughing: Magical Feminism’s Witches in Contemporary Film, Television, and Novels. May 2007. CM

Instead of Medusa-snakes in her hair **we see** a snake wrapped suggestively around the effigy’s naked body, bringing in allusions not only to Medusa but also to **Lilith**, aligning Proserpexa **with** these other **icons of female power, unruliness, and sexuality**. As **Lilith**, the statue **represents female sexuality tied to unruly, powerful female speech**. While her sexuality might be contained, as her nakedness is wrapped, constrained by the phallic snake, her tongue still juts pointily out, committing unheard speech acts that allow Willow to channel this energy to try to destroy the world. **Her unrestrained, rebellious, verbal expression**, represented by this pointy tongue, **reminds us of Lilith’s powerful speech in escaping the Garden of Eden**. In speaking God’s true name to escape the Garden of Eden and Adam**, Lilith’s unruly, disobedient speech resonates as an icon of powerful female speech.** However, for Proserpexa and Willow, the speech act is unspoken, “the word” unheard but only seen in the tongue’s protrusion. This representation of wild, **powerful language that is not delicate and feminine places** this as **unruly female speech rather than male logos**. **Instead of a male God speaking the world into being with a single phrase, this female figure of power** **will** allow her disciple Willow, who has absorbed through her hands “the words” of dozens of magic books (leaving white, blank pages) to **scorch the earth, destroying the world** without a single word ever being spoken.

The praxis of the 1AC is key for all women. I reject the notion of sluttiness as something bad. Purity and dirtiness are not qualities of sexual actions and never should be. Sex is sex and shouldn’t be policed anymore. **Prude-Hunt:** Alisa Prude-Hunt. The Politics of Sluttiness (Can You Afford to be a Ho?). <http://ewp.cas.nyu.edu/docs/IO/39266/prudeafford.pdf> CM

**The way** in which **hooks went about having sex** with people **was** arguably **a political act**. In **resisting the conventions of** male and female **sexuality**, she felt that she **was reclaiming her sexual autonomy.** I think hooks feels that **this defiance of convention and stereotype is the key to** the **sexual liberation of** white women and **women** of color alike. For women to liberate themselves from the bounds of the “status quo,” **the white woman’s rejection of her sexuality as “pure”** and bordering on childlike **is just as essential as the black woman’s rejection of her role as a “ho**” or a “mammy.” And we’re left to assume that **hooks** intentionally **sought** out sexual **partners she knew would respect her** for who she was, as a woman of color, and not a caricature of black womanhood. hooks’s **demand for respect defies** not only **sexism**, but racism as well. In the same way I’d originally overlooked the key word, assertive, in hooks’s description of a formerly “sexually assertive” Madonna, I’d completely ignored the way in which she engaged with sex in her own life (“Power” 10). **The how** really, really **matters**.∂ Such **pointed and confrontational analyses embody** hooks’s **demand for the acknowledgement of** black **women’s humanity**. In order for a black woman to even begin to claim her sexuality, she must first be humanized. While hooks shows us through her own sexual experiences that sexual liberation is possible for a black woman, she makes it very clear that no sexual agency can be reclaimed so easily if black women are not afforded the same spectrum of sexual identity and expression as white women are.∂ An undertone in hooks’s work is a coming to terms with the notion that most **sex comes with political responsibility**. Through her critical analyses of contemporary society, **hooks seeks for all women to understand** **the power dynamics** that our culture has **fused to sex,** lest we fall victim to a trap of exploitation and a reinforcement of stereotypes thinly disguised as progressive. If we do not see through this veil, hooks warns, we become Madonnas fooled into thinking we’re Ellen Willises, and Whitney Houstons thinking we’re Audre Lordes.∂ But **most important**, perhaps, to hooks’s work **is a striving towards an inclusive feminism,** a want to **liberate all women from a society that restricts the freedom of sexual identity and empowerment**. This map of hooks’s mind fills me with the same sense of “promise and possibility,” the same “vision of freedom” that the image of a black Madonna evoked in her (10). When reading hooks’s work, the confident college girl I imagine her to have been is brought to life, the demand of her own agency evoked in every word she writes.

The image of the succubus presents a ironic critique of the patriarchy- it takes the concepts the patriarchy fears the most In the form of the femme fatale and uses them as a subversive attack on the system. Kérchy:

Fevvers’ spectacular performances in Ma Nelson’s brothel and Madame Schreck’s Museum of Woman Monsters, her posing in tableau vivant as Cupid, “the sign of love,” as Winged Victory, “a perfect, active beauty . . . mutilated by history” (37), and as **the castrating femme fatale** Angel of Death, also carry ambivalent meanings. She **repeats patriarchal stereotypical representations** of women with a wink, via a “perverse dynamics of transgressive reinscription,”11 a parody turned into politics, she performs à la Judith Butler a “gender trouble” with the aim to denaturalize the regulative fiction **of a true gender identity**, and to reveal the culturally constituted, ideologically-discursively reproduced, repetitive and overall performative aspect of gender, that is always already a “copy of the copy,”12 and thus **to provide** in the long run **an ironic critique of the ideology** of representation **limiting female identification**. According to Butler and Fevvers, it is only within the (patriarchal) practices of repetitive signifying that alternative domains of cultural intelligibility, new **possibilities of gender contest**ing the rigid **codes of hierarchical binarisms** and **subversions of substantive identity** may **become possible**.13 Butler’s description of “doing gender trouble” is particularly fitting for Fevvers’ carnivalesque grotesque performance: “doing gender [she] repeat[s] and displace[s] through hyperbole, dissonance, internal con- fusion, and proliferation the very constructs by which [her possibilities of doing gender] are mobilized.”14 Fevvers’ wings recall patriarchal topoi as the Victorian Angel in the House, defined uniquely in relation to man as subordinated wife and mother, the Muse exploited to inspire male creativity and muted herself, Fairies objected to the rape of the male gaze, as well as the winged statue of Nike of Samothrace, which simply lacks a head. However, realizing her performative possibilities for **proliferating alternative gender configurations**, she **subverts** these **clichés of femininity** from within: she acts out an angel in the house of suffragette whores, her sexual activity mocks the Victorian angel, yet she also **challenges the stereotype of the whore, the supernatural succubus**, as her confidence trick is based on her claimed virginity. She continuously uses her heterogeneous body as a space for the narrative deconstruction of her identity, by technologies of the self working against Foucaultian technologies of power, she erases and rewrites traditional stories of femininity, weaving her own texts, becoming an author of her own. Fevvers is **a self-parodic and self-made woman** (de)constructing her patchwork wings by recycling the divine Leda and the Swan just as much as a lowly London pigeon. She flies by reweaving myths and gossip, art and craft, by relying subversively on the established knowledge of library books just as much as on Lizzie’s innovative calculations, and on Baudelaire’s albatross-artist. She is never what she seems to be, she **performs simulacra**, her repetition is **a revision of icons of femininity and an embodiment of her multiple selves**, constituting a part of her confidence trick, **a subversive feminist tactic**, revealing a liberating play of carnivalesque identities and narratives inspired by a heterogeneous body, rendering engendered, homogeneous identity “radically incredible.”15